

NATIVITY THOUGHTS

(REPRINTED)

V. F. Beliajus

GOOD WILL

There are two versions regarding the proclamation that took place on the day of the Nativity. Catholics have it: "Peace on earth and to men of good will". Protestants: "On earth peace, Good will toward men." (Luke 2:14). We will not argue who is right and we will certainly not introduce the "Auto Da Fe" to prove our point. We worship according to our understanding. To me, both versions are acceptable. It seems to be a fact that peace can come only to men of good will, as the Catholics have it. Then again, if we extend good will toward all men regardless of their deportment, we should enjoy peace. Perhaps the purpose of Christ's birth, was rather to bring good will to those in need of it. For people who have good will usually already enjoy peace. Let us also consider the saying of the great Chinese sage, Lao Tse: "To those who are good to me, I am good; to those who are not good to me, I am good. Thus, all get to be good."

Regardless of version, both speak of peace and good will, but we enjoy little of both. Our good will is like the Christmas seal, temporary and merely decorative. "Just before Christmas I'm as good as can be." And some will even "break their necks" to show their goodness, for who knows, there might appear a write-up and perhaps a picture in the papers showing how they cheer the unfortunate.

Good will must be perpetual if we want peace. Good will truly costs nothing. If the good will, to bring which Jesus was born into this world and for which He was crucified, existed among all men; we would have been spared of the present conflicts; and departed dear ones would be in our midst this very day. Ill will, intolerance, unjust discrimination and prejudices are our afflictions. Let us have good will all year around, and every year for ever and ever. Amen!

XTMAS SEALS

The purchase of Christmas seals this season carries a different meaning to me. I've been on the mailing list of the Chicago office for ten years and getting seals merely meant a "Christmassy" decoration for letters. TB as a dreadful disease was unknown to me. Erroneously I thought it was like hay fever with a climatic cause. All one had to do to overcome it was to move to Colorado and stay there. But now we know that climate and TB have nothing in common. An afflicted person can die just as painfully in Colorado as he does in the coastal regions. In the United States alone, the least TB suffering country, each minute a TB afflicted person dies! Mind you! That means TB kills more people in one year in the United States than two years of war! Yet all the efforts of research and science are concentrated on ways and means to indiscriminately destroy life. Meanwhile, the death rate from TB increases instead of decreasing, nor are the pangs of the sufferer alleviated — and our youth, between the ages of 20 and 35, are the main victims!

Those not afflicted do not realize the horror of TB. Their support toward combatting it, at best, is insignificant — "Christmassy". People as a whole seem to consider TB more as social disease than one requiring sympathy and support. More effort is expended on eradicating syphilis that harlots and debauchers may continue their activities. And yet most any one, child or adult, can be an innocent victim of TB.

True, Christmas comes once a year, but TB lurks and strikes every minute. Support TB societies every minute too. Buy Christmas seals!

KHANUKKAH — THE CHRISTMAS OF THE JEWS

V. F. Beliajus

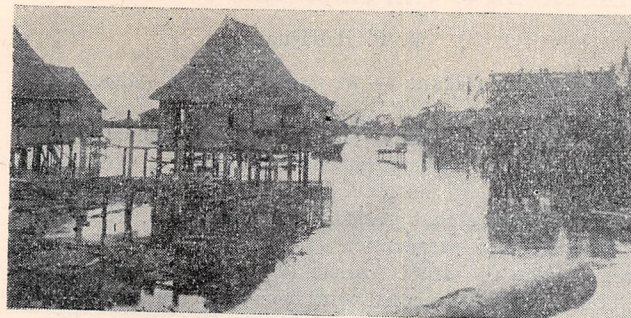
Khanukkah (Khanu — we camped; K'H — the 25th... of the Hebrew month Kislev) the eight-day Festival of Lights, merriest holiday on the Jewish calendar, falls sometimes during December, and often around Christmas time. The battle of the Maccabees and the Syriac-Greeks terminated during that period 2,100 years ago. The Jews suffered inhuman persecution at the hands of the Syriac-Greeks under the cruel Antiochus Epiphanes. Numerous are the legends connected with this festival, legends of suffering, martyrdom and heroic deeds. But the most important of these is the heroic battle of a handful of people, who fought the well trained and armed Greeks to end the latter's rule in Palestine and established the second Judean Kingdom.

Legend has it that when Palestine was cleared of the Greeks, all the sacred places and the temple in Jerusalem were found desecrated, and the vigil-lamp (Ner ha'tamid) which was intended to burn constantly had been extinguished. A bit of oil, sufficient for one day's burning, was found. This particular bit of oil burned for eight days. It is in commemoration of these two incidents, the overthrow of the Antiochian rule and the eight day oil miracle, that the Jews celebrate Khanukkah making the holiday a week of joy.

Traditional observances are kept up to the present day. Instead of oil, candles are burned for eight days, commencing with one candle and adding a candle each day. During the lighting of the candles, the family gathers; the head of the family, who observes the ritual of lighting the candles, sings the story of Khanukkah. Then all join in singing Khanukkah songs describing the cruelties of Antiochus, praising the bravery of the Khasmoneans (Maccabee family), and relating the martyrdom of the noble example set by Hannah and her seven sons (She and her children leaped to their death rather than kneel to the Greek idols). "Latkes" (potato pancakes) are always eaten during Khanukkah and presents are exchanged.

A favorite Khanukkah game is the playing of the "dreidel" (Spindle) Sviyah in Hebrew), equivalent to the American child's top, except that it is much smaller. At most its axis does not exceed two inches. It is either of zinc or wood, square or with wings protruding. On the wings four letters are impressed (one for each wing): N, G, H, S (initials for the Hebrew words "Nes Gadol Hayah Sham", meaning, A great miracle took place there). When the dreidel is spun and it falls to a stop, the letter face-up indicates the player's luck. As many as care to may play this game, children as well as adults. To start the game, each one places a certain amount in the pot — let us say a penny. One player turns the dreidel. If it falls on the N, that means he did not win anything. Now it is the next one's turn. For him the S turns face-up — that means he has to add a penny. One of the players might have a little luck and the H will turn up; he takes half of the pot. Again, a player might be even luckier and the G will turn up; he takes the whole pot.

NOTE: The College of Jewish Studies, 72 E. 11th St., will publicly celebrate Khanukkah and Melveh Malkah (The Send-Off of Sabbath the Queen) on Saturday, Dec. 21st in the evening. People interested in the unique customs of others will enjoy attending that celebration. This year Khanukkah falls on Dec. 17 to the 24th.



A Moro village in Zamboanga, Phillipines. According to Jimmy Evanson of Jamestown, N. D. who spent some time among the Moros, the town is picturesque enough, but it smells. Transportation is by water taxis — 10 Centavos.

Xmas Party At Museum

The Museum of Science and Industry, in Jackson Park, Chicago, will sponsor Christmas parties of individual nations open to the public, from November 30 to December 17. Eighteen nationalities will be represented. A Christmas tree for each nation with typical decorations of each nationality represented will decorate the hall throughout that period. Each day is set aside for a certain nationality whose songs, dances and customs will be portrayed. The Lithuanians with Mrs. Petras Dauzvardis in charge are scheduled for December 8 at 2 P. M. The "Ateitis" folk dancers under the direction of V. F. Beliajus will prepresent folk dances. There will also be folk songs and carols. The tree decorations are especially made by Mrs. Mazilauskas. Dr. Al Rackus, former curator of the Museum of Vytautas the Great in Kaunas, Lithuania, has made a special study of Lithuanian Christmas customs. Lithuanian girl dolls which will decorate the tree are made by Mrs. Samas, while the boy dolls by George Paskauskas.

The Growth Of Keistuto Assn.

At a meeting held on October 18th for the members and share holders of Keistuto Savings and Loan Assn. in Chicago, the president of the organization, Mr. Tamas S. Janulis, gave a very commendable report on the growth of the organization. According to secretary Joseph M. Mozeris, a VILTI'ite, at the end of the fiscal year, June 30th, the organization was valued at \$3,243,136.26. 2646 members have savings amounting to \$2,871,889.70. Loans totalling \$1,134,800.00 include 32 G-I loans representing \$200,000. Reserves over \$145,000.

The ruling board: Tamas S. Janulis, pres.; Frank Kiksas, vice-pres.; Joseph M. Mozeris, secretary; Stanley Stanevich, treasurer; Mary Risin, asst. to the secretary. Directors are: John Budrik, Kazys Demereckis, John Mazelauskis, Isidor Pupauskas and John Zacharewich.

The organization is planning a festive celebration on its Golden Anniversary in the coming year.

Three Cheers For Fairhope

Fairhope continues its progressive and pioneering spirit, always doing something noteworthy. Fairhope was the first Single Tax colony in the United States; it established the first progressive school in the South. Now the town council of Fairhope has named a street after a Negro — in memory of Parker Young, a lowly colored man who did nothing of great consequence, but merely lived in that vicinity when Fairhope was established 53 years ago in January. Fairhope, we salute you!

FOR FRIENDSHIP'S SAKE

By CLAYTON C. CAMPBELL
1100 Main, Rolla, Mo.

"And on Earth — Peace"

Peace has been defined as "amicable or harmonious relations between people" and friendship, in the same dictionary, is defined as "amity." The former terms can just as easily apply to nations as to individuals and the latter term may likewise be so applied.

Today the Assembly of the United Nations is making an effort to coordinate these two terms in an individual sense and in the larger international aspect as well. In round table discussions, in committee meetings and in group conferences constructive steps are being taken to solve international problems; vexing situations where a clear understanding and a forthright friendly willingness to see the other fellow's angle is evidencing itself. This is but a single step in the right direction.

Friendliness and peace, amity and harmonious relations with our sister nations point the way to a happier for all of us. But the desired state will not come quickly or without great labor. Peace is expensive in money and in effort. But the application of friendly attitudes and quiet discussions pave the way to that great goal.

May I take this opportunity to wish my readers a very joyful Xmas and extended by best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year in 1947.

NEW BOOKS

By CLAYTON C. CAMPBELL
ANIMAL WORLD Harcourt, Brace & Co.
By George Orwell 118 P.P. \$1.75

From the sharp pen of a contemporary English writer comes one of the most powerful political satires seen in many a day. Animal World is a satirization of Soviet Russia. Certainly Mr. Orwell has pulled no punches in setting forth his feelings about Russia and her political system.

Briefly, Mr. Jones, a careless farmer, is driven from his farm by a rebellion of the animals and an animal UTOPIA is set up under the control of the pigs, especially Snowball and Napoleon. But these two august leaders could not agree. There is Boxer, the tired old willing plough horse and Benjamin the donkey who never talks or smiles and Mollie, the mare, who loved ribbons.

The last scene is excellent. The bewildered animals looking thru the windows of the farm house seeing the pigs dominated by Napoleon toasting their human neighbors and each other and finally realizing after looking from pig to man and from man to pig and pig to man again that it was quite impossible to tell which was which.

This book has been pronounced an illuminating fable of our time. It is exciting and is keenly written prose. It should find an eager public.

FACTS ABOUT VILTIS

VILTIS is the only Lithuanian paper (or the only paper of a nationality group) which is mainly read by non-Lithuanians. Among our readers we have Jews, Negroes, Phillipinos, Indians, Poles and practically every nationality represented; Priests, Rabbis and Ministers; educators, doctors, laborers and artists of all types; young and old. It is read in Canada, England, France, Japan, the Phillipines, Panama and New Zealand by civilians. VILTIS first saw light in Fairhope, Alabama, weathered through its infancy in a sanatorium in Cottage Hill, Ala., and it grows in popularity now that it comes from Chicago offices.